

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /085 W  
-----091037 021906Z /23

P 021458Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1617  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 2862

E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: PBOR, PDEV, IS  
SUBJ: WEIZMAN FORBIDS KADESH BARNEA SETTLEMENT GROUP TO ENTER  
PERMANENT JEBEL HILAL SITE

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 2788, (B) TEL AVIV 2565

1. SUMMARY: MINDEF WEIZMAN HAD ISSUED ORDERS PREVENTING  
KADESH BARNEA SETTLEMENT NUCLEUS FROM MOVING INTO THEIR  
PERMANENT SITE NEAR JEBEL HILAL IN SINAI. CABINET SEC-  
RETARY NAOR STATED ON MARCH 2 THAT WEIZMAN ACTED IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION. HE ADDED THAT THE  
RECENT CABINET DECISION ONLY APPROVED THE STRENGTHENING  
OF EXISTING SETTLEMENTS IN THE SINAI. SHARON CLAIMED  
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TO BE SURPRISED BY THE EVENT AND INTENDS TO CLARIFY  
ISSUE IN TALKS WITH WEIZMAN. BEGIN MET TOGETHER WITH SHARON AND  
WEIZMAN MARCH 2 AND DID NOT OVERULE WEIZMAN. WEIZMAN AND SHARON  
ALSO MET SEPARATELY AND AGREED TO DISAGREE ON THEIR INTERPRE-  
TATIONS OF CABINET SETTLEMENT POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. TWO DAYS AGO SETTLERS BELONGING TO THE KADESH

BARNEA SETTLEMENT NUCLEUS WERE PREVENTED BY IDF SOLDIERS FROM ENTERING THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT BEING ESTABLISHED FOR THEM AT FOOT OF JEBEL HILAL. THE TROOPS WERE ACTING UNDER THE ORDERS OF THE EL ARISH MILITARY GOVERNOR, WHO HAD IN TURN RECEIVED HIS INSTRUCTIONS DIRECTLY FROM THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. WEIZMAN EXPLAINED HIS ORDER BY NOTING HE HAD ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAST SUNDAY'S CABINET DECISION. IF THE AGRICULTURE MINISTER HAD ANY RESERVATIONS--HE WOULD HAVE TO APPEAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER. (A MOD SOURCE TOLD US THAT WEIZMAN HAD NOT CONSULTED WITH BEGIN BEFORE ISSUING HIS INSTRUCTIONS.)

3. ON MARCH 2 CABINET SECRETARY NAOR ASSERTED THAT THE "MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS ACTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION." HE NOTED THAT LATEST CABINET DECISION ONLY MENTIONED THE STRENGTHENING OF EXISTING SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI. HE ADDED THAT AN ARGUMENT COULD ARISE OVER THE DEFINITION OF THE KADESH BARNEA SETTLEMENT. "THE QUESTION IS WHETHER A SETTLEMENT ALREADY EXISTS THERE (AS THE SETTLERS CLAIM), OR WHETHER WHAT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED DOES NOT COUNT AS AN EXISTING SETTLEMENT."

4. APPROVAL FOR A NAHAL SETTLEMENT IN THE KADESH BARNEA AREA WAS ORIGINALLY GIVEN BY THE RABIN GOVERNMENT IN 1976. A NAHAL UNIT MOVED INTO THE 'AYN QUSAYMAH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IDF CAMP NEAR KADESH BARNEA IN JANUARY 1977. IN NOVEMBER 1977 A CIVILIAN GROUP AFFILIATED WITH THE MOSHAV MOVEMENT, SETTLED IN THE 'AYN QUSAYMAH-KADESH BARNEA AREA. A SETTLEMENT IN THIS AREA WAS REPORTEDLY REAPPROVED IN DECEMBER BY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE SHARON'S MINISTERIAL SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE. ACCORDING TO A KNOWN-LEDGEABLE MOD SOURCE, THE KADESH BARNEA NUCLEUS INCLUDES LESS THAN 20 PERSONS. HE ADDED THAT NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ARE BEING CARRIED OUT AT THE KADESH BARNEA ANTIQUITY SITE.

5. DUE TO THE AVAILABILITY OF WATER, A PERMANENT SITE FOR THE KADESH BARNEA SETTLEMENT WAS FIXED AT THE FOOT OF JEBEL HILAL, IN THE VICINITY OF THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE NEAR THE NITZANA-BIR LAHFAN ROAD, FACING ABU AGEILA (ABOUT 15 KM WEST OF 'AYN QUSAYMAH). ACCORDING TO A PRESS OBSERVER WHO VISITED THE SITE ON MARCH 1, WORKERS WERE CONSTRUCTING A CEMENT CASING FOR A WELL; A BULLDOZER WAS WORKING NEARBY; AND TWO PRE-FAB BUILDINGS HAD BEEN SET-UP. THE JERUSALEM POST (ARENSTEIN) REPORTED THAT THE IDF HAD STOPPED THE ASSEMBLY OF HOUSES THERE LAST WEEK. TWO RESERVISTS AT THE SITE WERE ALSO QUOTED

AS SAYING THAT THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED BY THE EL ARISH

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MILITARY GOVERNOR NOT TO ALLOW ANY CIVILIANS INTO  
THE AREA.

6. SHARON STATED THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 1 THAT HE  
HAD JUST HEARD ON THE RADIO THAT AN ORDER HAD BEEN GIVEN  
FORBIDDING THE KADESH BARNEA NUCLEUS FROM MOVING TO ITS  
PERMANENT SETTLEMENT SITE. HE ADDED THAT THIS SETTLE-  
MENT HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY BOTH PREVIOUS AND  
PRESENT GOVERNMENT DECISIONS. HE NOTED THAT LAST  
SUNDAY'S CABINET DECISION DID NOT JUSTIFY WEIZMAN'S  
ORDER SINCE THE GOVERNMENT ONLY DEALT WITH PLANNED  
ACTIVITIES WHICH WERE TO BE FROZEN, NOT EXISTING SETTLE-  
MENTS. SHARON STATED THAT THIS QUESTION WOULD BE CLARI-  
FIED TODAY IN TALKS WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE.  
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7. ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 2 BEGIN, SHARON AND WEIZMAN MET TO DISCUSS THE KADESH BARNEA IMBROGLIO. EFRAIM LAHAT OF ISRAEL RADIO TOLD US THAT BEGIN DID NOT OVERRULE WEIZMAN'S DECISION. IN ADDITION, IN A SEPARATE MEETING SHARON AND WEIZMAN DECIDED TO POSTPONE A DECISION ON WHOSE INTERPRETATION OF CABINET SETTLEMENT POLICY WAS CORRECT (I.E., THEY FAILED TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES ON SETTLEMENT POLICY).

8. COMMENT: ON THE SURFACE, THE ISSUE IS WHETHER THE JEBEL HILAL SITE (THE PERMANENT SITE FRONT) OR A NEW SETTLEMENT (ACCORDING TO WEIZMAN). IN REALITY, WEIZMAN APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO PROBE--BEFORE DEPARTING ON HIS TRIP TO THE U.S.--THE EXTENT OF HIS SUCCESS AT SUNDAY'S CABINET SESSION, AND HOW MUCH SUPPORT HE CAN EXPECT FROM BEGIN AND THE OTHER MINISTERS IN KEEPING SHARON UNDER CONTROL. BEGIN'S UNWILLINGNESS TO OVERRIDE WEIZMAN'S DECISION AND CABINET SECRETARY NAOR'S COMMENTS INDICATE THAT WEIZMAN IS DOING WELL.  
LEWIS

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## Message Attributes

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